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**Economic violence towards Palestinians women who are citizens of Israel**

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While most studies of gender-based violence have focused on its physical, sexual, and psychological manifestations, this paper seeks to draw attention to the types of economic violence experienced by Palestinians women who are citizens of Israel, describing its consequences in various aspects of their lives.

Various studies have discussed the complexity characterizing the daily lives of Palestinian women in Israel, who experience multiple realities simultaneously and live their lives in spaces demanding mastery of a language of mixed cultures and imposing ambivalent, "hyphenated" realities with regard to identity and independence. Under such conditions, oppression and self-preservation are interwoven with challenges and resistance. Despite exclusion from the Israeli hegemony and the multiple economic, status-related and political tensions that shape their lives – including marginality and various types of vicious circles – Palestinian women in Israel are indeed affected by the processes experienced by Israeli society as a whole. Over the past three decades, familial, economic, educational and sociocultural changes have been taking place within this group, especially declining birth rates, greater participation of women in the work force, increased education and changes in traditional-patriarchal perceptions. These changes are reshaping the options available to Palestinian in Israel – and especially to the women among them – in numerous aspects of life, including family and gender relations.

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| Economic violence is one aspect of a broader discussion concerning women’s financial rights. Even today, many women, including working women and women with a higher education degree, are unable to achieve financial independence, having been denied ownership of economic resources and family property. Moreover, they suffer from inferior conditions, lower salaries, discrimination and offensive attitudes at work. These situations are part of a more extensive compass of economic-violence manifestations that are typically underreported, as are other types of violence. Economic violence also has a gender component, serving as an instrument for the control, restriction and subordination of women by their families or employers and as an effective tool for exploitation of gender power relations. |  |  | |  |
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The World Report on Violence and Health (WHO, 2002) announced that poverty violates the human rights of women and their children by denying them education, food, health, housing, participation in political and public life and freedom from violence. Furthermore, women seldom experience economic violence in isolation. Economic abuse tends to engender an atmosphere of tension and general unrest over material concerns that may incite other types of violence as well. It also reflects social inequality and promotes sexual exploitation of women (Olufunmilayo, 2008; Durusay, 2013).

Based on qualitative research I conducted among Palestinians women citizens of Israel, it provides a glimpse at manifestations of economic violence, focusing on: (1) Single-mothers’ experiences and the coping mechanisms they employ in family issues and (2) attitudes towards inheritance among Palestinians women and the normative trend of inheritance renunciation despite the options offered them within the framework of Shari’a religious law and Israel’s civil legal system.

In Israel, two judicial systems address family law: Civil and religious. As such, adjudication of family claims takes place in a bipolar space between religious courts and pluralistic secular judicial instances – a duality that increases violation of women's rights (regarding marriage, divorce, custody, alimony, etc.), complicates judicial processes and reduces women's trust in these legal systems.

Analysis employs terminology taken from Walby’s (1989) *dual systems theories*, examining the ways in which economic oppression of women takes place simultaneously in two mutually reinforcing spheres (private and public) within a patriarchal context.

The apparent approach (both formal rulings and informal behavior) to the resulting interactions demonstrates the importance of empirical investigations of religious tribunals in Western countries (Hacker, 2010). In accomplishing this goal, we need to remember that the situation is rendered more complex by personal distress and reluctance to seek out government assistance. Together with the ongoing absence of Israeli law enforcement in Palestinian Israeli areas, these factors often prevent de facto protection of Palestinian Israeli women.

Finally, the above manifestations of economic violence against Palestinian Israeli women may serve as an example of the heavy price women pay when multicultural approaches in Western countries are not supported by complementary social policies (see, e.g., Okin, 1999). By disregarding such practices for the sake of "cultural sensitivity" and "multiculturalism", Israel actually perpetuates them, rendering Palestinian women "invisible" and vulnerable to economic violence.